

Message Text

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SUBJECT: EMBASSY ASSESSMENT OF GREEK PUBLIC REACTION TO CYPRUS

1. CYPRUS CRISIS HAS PRODUCED CERTAIN IMMEDIATE REACTIONS FROM GOG AND AMONG GREEK PUBLIC THAT BEAR WATCHING, BUT IN LONGER RANGE PERSPECTIVE SHOULD NOT BE EXAGGERATED, WHETHER VIEWED FROM GREEK OR U.S. STANDPOINT.

2. WE MUST TAKE FULL ACCOUNT OF FACT THAT AFTER SEVEN YEARS UNDER REPRESSIVE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP, GREEKS ARE UNDERSTANDABLY OVERREACTING IN ATMOSPHERE OF NEW-FOUND FREEDOM. EUPHORIA PRODUCED BY RETURN OF CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT UNDER KARAMANLIS AND BY PROMISE OF POLITICAL NORMALIZATION WAS REGRETTABLY ABRUPTLY SHATTERED BY TURKISH INTERVENTION IN CYPRUS. NEW GOVERNMENT, MOVING CAUTIOUSLY TO MAINTAIN CRITICALLY NEEDED CONTINUED SUPPORT BY MILITARY ELEMENTS, FOUND ITSELF IN PRECARIOUS SITUATION. IF IT GAVE WAY TO EXTREMISTS IN MILITARY TO RESORT TO WAR IT RECOGNIZED THIS WOULD HAVE DISASTROUS RESULTS, BOTH BECAUSE GREECE WOULD SUFFER HUMILIATING MILITARY DEFEAT AND PROSPECTS FOR RESTORATION OF DEMOCRACY WOULD DISAPPEAR. ON THE OTHER HAND, SOME OTHER MEANS OF MEETING IMPERATIVE NEED FOR ACTION WITHIN TOLERABLE LIMITS HAS TO BE FOUND. FOR TIME BEING GOG HAS APPARENTLY CHOSEN TO FALL BACK ON TRADITIONAL GREEK TENDENCY TO PLACE BLAME FOR THEIR PROBLEMS ELSEWHERE--IN IMMEDIATE CASE ON US FOR NOT MOVING TO STOP TURKS-- AND CONSEQUENTLY

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TO LET NATIONAL WAVE OF ANTI-AMERICANISM DEVELOP. AT SAME TIME,

SINCE TURKISH INTERVENTION IN CYPRUS COULD NOT BE IGNORED, GREEKS APPARENTLY CAREFULLY WEIGHTED ALTERNATIVES AND DECIDED GENEVA DISCUSSIONS WERE WORTH GAMBLE THAT TURKS MIGHT ENGAGE IN MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATION THAT WOULD PRODUCE TOLERABLE RESULT BUT GOING BEYOND THAT WHICH GOG HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN WILLING TO ACCEPT OR WHICH PREDECESSOR REGIME BELIEVED IT COULD BRING MAKRRARIOUS GOVT TO ACQUIESCE IN. EVEN OUTCOME OF PHASE ONE AT GENEVA WAS BITTER PILL FOR GREEKS GIVEN THEIR HISTORICAL ATTACHMENT TO ENOSIS AND CAUSE OF GREATER HELLENISM.

3. BREAKDOWN OF GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS AS RESULT OF TURKISH ULTIMATUM FOLLOWED IMMEDIATELY BY RENEWED TURKISH MILITARY ACTION MADE IT IMPERATIVE FOR KARAMANLIS TO FIND NEW OUTLETS FOR PENT UP GREEK EMOTIONS. IT WAS AGAINST THIS BACKGROUND THAT GOG CALLED ON FIVE PERMANENT SECURITY COUNCIL MEMBERS TO TAKE "NECESSARY INITIATIVES" TO RESTORE PEACE AND WITHDREW PARTICIPATION OF GREEK MILITARY FORCES IN NATO. BOTH MOVES WERE CLEARLY SUBSTITUTES FOR MORE DRASTIC ACTION BEING URGED BY EXTREMIST QUARTERS AND WERE DESIGNED TO MAINTAIN SUPPORT FOR PRESENT GOVERNMENT WHETHER FROM THOSE WHO WANTED TO SEE GREECE RESORT TO FORCE OR FROM THOSE WHO WANTED TO SEE GREECE CHARTING MORE INDEPENDENT AND POTENTIALLY NEUTRALIST FUTURE COURSE.

4. WHEN DUST OF PRESENT CRISIS SETTLES WE BELIEVE PRESENT PROBLEMS SHOULD DIMINISH. UPSWING OF ANTI-AMERICANISM AS COEFFICIENT OF FRUSTRATION AND RAGE OVER TURKISH VICTORIES IN CYPRUS SHOULD BE SEEN AGAINST BACKGROUND OF OVER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS OF STAUNCH PRO-AMERICANISM. GREEK FEELINGS TOWARD U.S. ARE BASED ON SOLID TIES WHICH DEVELOPED FROM TRUMAN DOCTRINE, OVER \$2 BILLION OF MILITARY AND ECONOMIC AID DISBURSED DURING 1950'S, CLOSE SECURITY RELATIONSHIP, AND STRONG CULTURAL AND FAMILIAL GREEK RELATIONS IN U.S. THERE ARE MORE THAN TWO MILLION GREEK-AMERICANS IN THE U.S., NUMBER

OF PROMINENT GREEK-AMERICANS IN AMERICAN POLITICAL LIFE AND STRONG TIES BETWEEN GREEK ORTHODOX CHURCHES IN BOTH COUNTRIES. WHILE GREEKS CONTINUE TO ATTRIBUTE ALL MAJOR EVENTS, PARTICULARLY UNPOPULAR ONES, TO OUTSIDE FORCE WHICH
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USUALLY MEANS U.S., THEY ARE ALSO SUFFICIENTLY SOPHISTICATED TO REALIZE THIS EXERCISE IN SELF-DECEPTION DOES NOT TAKE THEM VERY FAR IN SOLVING REAL PROBLEMS, WHATEVER THEIR SHORT-TERM REACTION. ON SECURITY SIDE, GREECE REMAINS KEENLY AWARE OF ITS EXPOSED POSITION IN EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN AND EVER-PRESENT THREAT OF WARSAW PACT SO THAT IN LONG RANGE IT UNDERSTANDS ITS NATO TIES REMAIN ESSENTIAL FOR REASONS OF SELF-PRESERVATION. SIMILARLY, ITS ECONOMY MUST DEPEND

ULTIMATELY UPON MAINTAINING AND REINFORCING ITS RELATIONS
WITH WESTERN EUROPE AND THE COMMON MARKET IN PARTICULAR.

5. WE THEREFORE HOPE AND BELIEVE THAT GREEK-U.S. COOPERATION
AND FRIENDSHIP WILL WEATHER THIS CURRENT STORM, ALTHOUGH THE
DEGREE OF GREEK DISILLUSIONMENT AND OUR CAPACITY TO REPAIR
THE DAMAGE INFLICTED ON OUR RELATIONS BY RECENT EVENTS WILL
DEPEND ON THE FUTURE COURSE OF THE CYPRUS CRISIS. THAT
CONSIDERABLE SHORT-TERM DAMAGE HAS BEEN DONE TO OUR POSITION
IN GREECE IS CLEAR. THAT THE ANTI-U.S. AND ANTI-NATO TRENDS
SET IN MOTION IN THE PAST FEW WEEKS COULD ACCELERATE,
SPURRED ON BY THE GREEK LEFT, AND BECOME IRREVERSIBLE IS A
RISK WE MUST FACE. BUT THAT RISK CAN BE REDUCED IF NOT
ELIMINATED BY EFFECTIVE U.S. ACTION TO RESOLVE THE CYPRUS
PROBLEM IN TERMS THAT GREECE CAN CALL HONORABLE AND WHICH
DO NOT IMPLY THAT THE U.S. HAS DECIDED TO ENCOURAGE OR
ACCEPT TURKISH HEGEMONY IN THE AEGEAN.
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